



THIS MONTH

- *New IT Advisor assignments*
- *DLS issues new IGRs, tax rate info*
- *MassGIS Parcel Level data-base update*
- *DLS schedules group training in September & October*

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NEW YEAR—NEW IT ADVISOR

Continuing with our “changing things up in FY 2013” theme: we’re changing community assignments in the DLS IT Section. You’ve had the same advisor since our last big shuffle in 2009, and in many cases you may still have the same advisor in FY 2013. Some of you will have someone new, however, as your first point of contact with DLS IT. The main reason for this is that we’re re-committing ourselves to superior customer service.

We’ve re-shuffled some internal duties to make Don Reynolds a full field advisor; instead of covering only a few

communities, Don will now be the primary advisor for 16. Arnold Kanter has graciously accepted Don’s internal responsibilities, including maintaining the CSC Web site and



DOR360 is the DOR’s major FY13 initiative to continually connect with and engage its many stakeholders

Public Access database. Arnold is already the Webmaster for DLS’s Web site, so the CSC site is in good hands.

One unfortunate reality is that more than 2/3 of the IT department is based in Boston, while the same proportion of clients are west of Worcester. Rest assured that everyone has the authority to schedule site visits when necessary, and is very willing to cross the State to see you. If you haven’t seen anyone from DLS IT in person in a while, we want to remedy that. Your IT advisor, whether a long-time friend or a new one, will be giving you a call. We hope to reconnect with you soon.

Kirsten Shirer, Editor

DLS ISSUES IGR 12-302

The Division of Local Services’ Municipal Finance Law Bureau just released an Informational Guideline Release (IGR) with possible tax rate implications: IGR 12-302: Fiscal Year 2013 Waivers for Education Reform Spending Requirements and Minimum Required Local Con-

tributions. The Department of Revenue may adjust municipalities’ minimum required local contributions to regional and local schools if they meet certain criteria. The IGR provides guidelines for determining eligibility as well as instructions for applying for a

waiver.

Visit the DLS Web site’s What’s New section to read or download IGR 12-302, or click here:

<http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/publ/igr/2012/igr12-302.pdf>

DLS RELEASES FY2013 TAX RATE RECAP INSTRUCTIONS



The Bureau of Accounts has released the FY 2013 Tax Rate Recap instructions and Excel workbook, about 3 weeks ahead of schedule. While using DLS Gateway for actual tax rate submission is strongly recommended, the Excel version can be useful for pre-submission analysis and as an analysis tool. Even if you plan to submit on Gateway, it's always a good idea to read the cover letter issued along with the Excel file. The Bureau of Local Assessment and Bureau of Accounts work cooperatively on the letter,

informing municipal officials of important tax-related considerations impacting the FY 2013 tax rate process. In this year's letter you'll find guidelines on the following topics:

- New overlay provisions for telephone valuations
- Reporting emergency expenditures relative to the June 2011 tornado and October 2011 snow storm
- Reporting Workers Compensation Fund or Unemployment Compensation Fund deficits

- Documenting Enterprise Fund indirect cost allocation increases
- Clarification of BOA policy concerning authorized signatures on the LA-5 and other forms

To read the cover letter click here:

<http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/boa/fy13-recap/fy2013taxratecover-letter.pdf>

For more information on the FY 2013 Tax Rate process, contact your community's BLA or BOA Field Representative.

Dates to remember in August and September



FROM THE MUNICIPAL CALENDAR

August 1 Taxpayer – Quarterly Tax Bills – Deadline for Paying 1st Quarterly Tax Bill Without Interest

August 1 Taxpayer – Annual Boat Excise Return Due

August 10 Assessors Deadline for Appealing EQVs to ATB (even numbered years only)

August 15 Assessors Deadline to Vote to Seek Approval for Authorization to Issue Optional

Preliminary Tax Bills

August 31 DOR/BOA Issue Instructions for Determining Local and District Tax Rates

August 31 Assessors Begin Work on Tax Rate Recapitulation Sheet (to set tax rate for semi-annual bills)

September 15 Accountant/Assessors Jointly Submit Community Preservation Surcharge Report

September 30 Taxpayer

Deadline for Submitting Forest Land Certification and Management Plan, M.G.L. Ch. 61

September 30 Municipal and District Treasurer/Collector – Submit Compensating Balance Report

September 30 Treasurer – Submit 4th Quarter Reconciliation of Cash for the Previous Fiscal Year

September 30 Treasurer – Submit Statement of Indebtedness

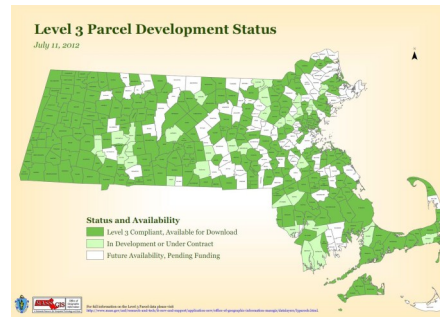
MASSGIS LEVEL 3 PARCEL DATA PROJECT UPDATE

Fiscal 2013 should see the completion of MassGIS’s Level 3 Assessors’ Parcel Mapping initiative. By the end of the fiscal year, all Massachusetts communities should have heard from the vendors responsible for collecting data extracts. Once the vendor processes the data, each community will receive an enhanced data set with the original data plus a new Location ID, or Loc_ID, assigned to each parcel. This Location ID is a unique identifier that ties a specific parcel to a specific location on a digital map. DLS IT staff are ready to assist you with merging the Location ID data provided by MassGIS’s vendors into your RPIS database. This is a one-time process; Loc_ID would then be maintained (and changed

when necessary) locally, along with the rest of your data.

What’s in it for you? If you’ve got an existing GIS system or are planning for one, MassGIS has shapefile and geodata available for download at no cost. As part of the project, MassGIS reviewed the data collected from each community and ran it through an extensive quality assurance process. The GIS data you receive back should be of good quality; in fact, they may have cleaned up discrepancies, in cooperation with the vendors, that make your digital maps more accurate.

Where can you get the data? The



MassGIS Level 3 Parcel Database—project status as of July 2012

extract data with Location ID will come from the vendor who originally collected it. The resulting GIS files can be downloaded from MassGIS’s Web site (caution: long URL):

<http://www.mass.gov/anf/research-and-tech/it-serv-and-support/application-serv/office-of-geographic-information-massgis/>

Please call your IT Advisor or IT Support when you’ve received the Loc_ID file from your MassGIS vendor partner. We’ll help you load Loc_ID to your RPIS database.

CAMA TRAINING SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER

It’s been a while, but the DLS IT education department is back in business. Four group training courses have been scheduled for September and October, focusing on the tasks assessors typically perform in the fall. Scheduled course offerings:

Preparing for Certification Using CSC Applications—this course covers topics including maintaining the Sales file, using IQ Objects and Business Objects to prepare certification reports and analyze data, and how to get that data from RPIS to Gateway.

RPIS: Entering Commercial

and Industrial Parcels—not sure how to enter a commercial property into RPIS? This course covers all things commercial/industrial. Breaking parcels into sections and groups, entering data in the right fields, deciphering 300 & 400 use codes, drawing a commercial sketch and using commercial-specific valuation methods will all be covered.

Completing the Assessment Cycle: Year End Tasks—this course focuses on the tasks typically performed in the fall: Value Finalization, running and verifying LA-4 counts and value totals, finding and

correcting coding errors, preparing for tax bills and rolling the database to the next fiscal year.

Intro to CSC Personal Property—if you’re new to the CSCPP app or just want to review the basics, you’ll learn how to enter both business and second home accounts, how to use, modify and add to depreciation and cost tables, how to export and analyze data and more.

Watch your email for more info, or check www.csc-ma.us for details and the registration form. Register today!

Group

Training

Schedule:

Grafton

Sept. 26

Oct. 31

Springfield

Oct. 3

Oct. 24



Community Software Consortium

www.csc-ma.us

Training and support provided by
The Division of Local Services' IT Group

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The Community Software Consortium is a self-governing municipal organization consisting of 60+ Massachusetts communities. It was established in 1996 under M.G.L. 40, § 4A to give every member access to quality technology products and services at a reasonable cost, through the power of joint purchasing. In FY 2012, the CSC was awarded a \$290,700 Community Innovation Challenge Grant by the Commonwealth to fund migration of its property appraisal and tax administration software applications to The Cloud.

For more information about the Community Software Consortium, contact the current Chairman of the CSC Board of Directors:

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TECH TIPS: SENDING REPORT DATA FROM ACCESS 2010 TO EXCEL 2010

Many of you may have used the "Office Links" feature of Access 2003 to send data from CSCPP or CSC Collection reports to an Excel workbook. This option disappeared in Access 2010, as one CSC member discovered recently, prompting a call to the IT Support line. Fortunately, Access 2010 actually makes that process easier.

Using CSCPP as an example: select a report (we'll use Account List-All) and click the Preview Report button. When the report appears on screen, look at the Office Ribbon—it automatically changes to the Print Preview ribbon.

Instead of having to hunt through the Tools menu for export options, Access 2010 presents the export choices right on the Print Preview ribbon. Click the Excel button and the Export-Excel dialog box opens. Select a destination folder (or use the default) and check the "Open destination file" box if you want Ex-

cel to open it right now. Leave it unchecked if you wish to just save the file for now. If a file with that name already exists you can replace it or choose another name. You can also save the export steps if you wish, but that's probably not necessary for an occasional task. Access 2010 makes it easy to export reports whenever you need to.

